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# The Anagnorisis and Its Use in Euripides

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THE ANAGNORISIS  
AND  
ITS USE IN EURIPIDES

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for the degree of  
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### **Vita Auctoris**

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## INTRODUCTION

### THE ANAGNORISIS AND ITS USE IN EURIPIDES

The authority of Aristotle's Poetics on most matters of literary criticism has been so universally accepted that it would be superfluous to commend the theories propounded in this golden little book and imprudent to reject them. Perhaps no other work of antiquity has so profoundly influenced subsequent poetic and artistic composition; certainly none has been so exhaustively treated by commentators of every country and of every age. As Lane Cooper points out, there are hardly 10,000 words in the Poetics itself as compared with the 375,000 of Castelvetro's famous exposition of the work. He notes also that in Bywater's edition the text occupies 45 out of 431 pages and in Butcher's, 55 out of 460! <sup>1</sup> The Poetics is only a hundreth part of the entire work of Aristotle, yet a bibliography for it fills an entire volume.

But besides this great mass of direct, critical study, we can also trace the influence of Aristotle in almost every treatise on poetry, drama, and fine art which has appeared since his day. In ancient times Theophrastus, Horace, and, to a lesser extent, Cicero borrowed from the Poetics. The essays of Addison, Dryden, Corneille, Lessing, and Racine on dramatic technique are all elaborations of principles first enunciated

by Aristotle. Even in our own day one need but glance through the latest college text on the "Theory of Poetry" or "How to Write a Play" to realize the indebtedness of modern scholars and educators to the original genius of Aristotle.

But despite the painstaking research expended on this exhaustive study (it were, perhaps, a minor form of blasphemy to say "because of it") there still remains much in the Poetics that is not explained to the complete satisfaction of all who read it. The essentials of Aristotle's theory are clear enough but its details present difficulties which meet the conscientious student on almost every page. There are difficulties arising from technical words of doubtful meaning; from obscure expressions which admit a variety of interpretations; from seemingly contradictory statements which cannot be reconciled without much splitting of hairs and chopping of logic. Few critics, for example, define ethos or phil-anthropon in exactly the same way. The precise meaning of the tragic fault, to say nothing of the tragic katharsis still escapes us. No one feels that there is, as yet, a wholly satisfactory explanation of the inconsistency into which Aristotle has fallen in demanding, at one point, that the ideal tragic hero be a personage of average human virtue and, at another, that he should not be like, but something above and better than the ordinary man.<sup>2</sup>

The function of the anagnorisis may not appear, at first blush, to deserve a place with these well known and time-honored problems. It is thought to be a term with a meaning definitely established, almost

self-understood. Most critics dismiss it with a few brief paragraphs. The dictionaries simply translate it as "a knowing again" or "a recognition" or, more ambitiously, "a recognition, as leading to a denouement."<sup>3</sup>

Now, although it would seem rash to question, where wise men agree, and captious, perhaps, to find difficulties where it is popularly supposed no difficulties exist, still we must insist that there are dramatic values in the anagnorisis which, though occasionally hinted at, have never been fully developed. It is the purpose of the present thesis to determine, from an analysis of the pertinent texts of the Poetics, whether there be justification for the somewhat cavalier treatment which this subject has received.

To this end, avoiding insistence upon isolated points, we shall have to fix upon a working definition of the term, examine with care the types of anagnorisis which Aristotle recognizes and, finally, discuss the dramatic value of these scenes in a Greek tragedy. In the second part of the thesis we shall go on to study the practical working out of this theory in the plays of Euripides, the dramatist in whose work the anagnorisis figures most prominently.

## PART THE FIRST

### CHAPTER I

#### ARISTOTLE'S EMPHASIS ON ANAGNORISIS

It must be noted at the outset that the anagnorisis is far from being the most significant topic treated in the Poetics. It would be a mistake to give the impression that it is. Aristotle, however, has seen fit to give it quite as much space in his brief and highly concentrated little treatise as he gives to the discussion of  $\eta\theta\omicron\varsigma$  (Character) and  $\lambda\mu\alpha\rho\tau\acute{\iota}\alpha$  (Error).<sup>4</sup> Consequently, whether we believe it essential or merely incidental to tragedy, we must make some attempt to account for the more than casual importance which Aristotle attaches to it.

He introduces the word in an early portion of his work without a definition. It is not unreasonable to suppose that this indicates his appreciation of the fact that anagnorisis, like many other technical words in the Poetics, was already sufficiently well known to his readers as a material element in the structure of tragedy.<sup>5</sup> We should hardly demand that a dramatic critic, writing at the present day, formulate a definition of "climax" or "rising action" or "catastrophe" before he dares to bring these terms into his discussion. The critic and his readers both appreciate the significance of such expressions, just as Aristotle and his contemporaries appreciated the significance of the



anagnorisis. It will be important, throughout, to consider our subject apart from modern ideas and prejudices. We are examining what the anagnorisis meant to Aristotle, not what it means to Twining or Tyrwhitt, Butcher or Bywater; we are to discuss it in connection with the plays of Euripides, not speculate about how it would fit into the work of Eugene O'Neill or Maxwell Anderson. With this in mind we shall not be too unsympathetic with Aristotle's insistence on the prominent place which the anagnorisis holds in the best drama; neglecting it, we shall never see anything more in this feature of Greek tragedy than a stilted, absurd conventionality---only one shade removed from the ridiculous "strawberry-mark-on-the-left-arm" recognition scenes of our fin de siècle melodrama.

But we need labor over no lengthy proof of Aristotle's appreciation of the anagnorisis, since he himself insists upon its importance in a number of places in the Poetics. We read that the most powerful elements of attraction in tragedy are the peripeteia and anagnorisis.<sup>6</sup> Aristotle uses the word  $\psi\upsilon\chi\alpha\gamma\omega\gamma\epsilon\iota$  which, as Bywater points out, means "to move or rivet the attention....the equivalent of our word 'attract' or (as people say sometimes) 'fascinate'."<sup>7</sup> Certainly this is a strong expression, and it becomes even more significant when we read it in connection with a later passage of the Poetics where it is stated that "an anagnorisis of this kind (i.e. joined with peripeteia) will excite pity or fear, and actions which produce these effects are most truly tragic."<sup>8</sup> Pity and fear are excited by suffering or the anticipation

of suffering. Hence, an anagnorisis which contributes to the  $\pi\acute{\alpha}\theta\omicron\varsigma$  or anguish of the hero will produce pity. If it merely suggests the coming of evil it will arouse fear. The fact that it brings about the happy or unhappy ending "is a further reason for saying that the discovery of relationships is most intimately connected with the action of the play. If the play has a happy ending, like the Lynceus or the Iphigenia in Tauris for instance, such a discovery will be a very natural way of bringing that about; and it is equally natural in the Oedipus Tyrannus and other plays with an unhappy ending."<sup>9</sup>

Moreover, the anagnorisis is intimately connected with the element of surprise which looms so large in the Poetics. Aristotle says: "Tragedy is an imitation not only of a complete action, but of events inspiring fear or pity. Such an effect is best produced when the events come on us by surprise."<sup>10</sup> The Pitiful and Fearful have the most powerful effect on the mind when they come upon us with a shock, though they be the logical consequence of all the events of the play that have gone before. In all the examples of anagnorisis which are proposed we find this suddenness and unexpectedness. Indeed, an ideal tragic situation is that "wherein the deed is done in ignorance and the discovery made afterwards. There is nothing odious about this and the discovery will serve to astound us."<sup>11</sup>

In this connection an interesting point is made by Tumlirz, who says that the word  $\xi\kappa\pi\lambda\eta\kappa\tau\iota\kappa\acute{o}\nu$ , as used in the Poetics, denotes the excitement and tension with which the audience awaits the anagnorisis,

rather than the astonishment which follows it.<sup>12</sup> This view is not, perhaps, strictly correct but whether it is or not the fact remains that a large measure of the dramatic interest in Tragedy comes from a skillful use of the anagnorisis.

The fundamental reason for Aristotle's insistence upon the importance of the anagnorisis is to be found in his persuasion that plot is "the first essential, the life and soul, as it were, of tragedy."<sup>13</sup> From this first principle he derives, by a kind of Sorites, all that he says concerning the value of the anagnorisis: Plot is the most important element of tragedy. But the best form of plot is the complex which is all anagnorisis and peripeteia. Hence these are τὰ μέγιστα οἷς ψυχρὰ γίγνεται. Let us examine this argument in greater detail.

Regarding Aristotle's doctrine of the central position of plot in tragedy there can be little doubt. Besides the quotation already given, in which he calls it the life and soul of tragedy, there are many others which might be instanced. It is "the most important of the formative elements" of the play.<sup>14</sup> And again, more philosophically, "the fable or plot is the end and purpose of tragedy; and the end is everywhere the most important thing."<sup>15</sup> He notes that it is only the more skillful poets who succeed in this department. Other features of the play, its thought, character, diction may be mediocre--but a plot that is well worked out will cover up these defects. In fact, "a tragedy without character is possible but a tragedy without plot is impossible."<sup>16</sup>

This plot will be either simple or complex. The simple is that

which proceeds in an undeviating course from start to finish, whereas the complex is built up of a series of surprises. These definitions we must arrive at ourselves from etymological considerations, since Aristotle feels that he makes the matter clear enough by saying that the former (the simple) does not involve peripeteia or anagnorisis and that the latter (the complex) does!<sup>17</sup> Now he states explicitly shortly after this that "for the finest form of tragedy the plot must be complex and not simple."<sup>18</sup> It is a logical necessity and not mere wishful thinking which leads us to believe that Aristotle arrives at this conclusion from the fact that the catastrophe in such a plot, worked out as it is by the anagnorisis and peripeteia (for the complex plot ὅλον ἐστὶν περιπέτεια καὶ ἀναγνώρισις),<sup>19</sup> is most successful in intensifying the tragic emotions.<sup>20</sup> Thus we see that in the ideal (καλλίστη) plot the peripeteia and anagnorisis are essential elements, while for the tragedy as a whole they are the most powerful means of arousing pity, fear and similar conscious attitudes. A chart embodying the material of these last three paragraphs and showing the position and divisions of anagnorisis will appear in Appendix A.

## CHAPTER II

THE MEANING OF ANAGNORISIS

It is much easier to appreciate Aristotle's recognition of the importance of the anagnorisis than it is to determine with absolute precision what he means by it. The difficulty of settling upon a definite meaning for the term arises from its use in a general as well as in a more specific or technical sense, without a clear distinction being anywhere drawn between the two. Let us examine this distinction a little more closely.

Aristotle deals expressly with the anagnorisis in but two passages of the Poetics, though he refers to it repeatedly in the course of his work. It is not until 1452a29 that he defines it. He says:

"The anagnorisis, as is indicated by the very name, is a change from ignorance to knowledge which brings either love or hate to the persons destined for good or evil fortune. The best form is that which is joined to a peripeteia as in the Oedipus. There are, of course, other kinds. For instance, one may recognize inanimate things even of a trivial nature. And again, one may recognize or discover whether a person has or has not performed an action of some sort. But the form most directly connected with the action of the plot is the recognition of persons which we have mentioned. This, with a peripeteia, will arouse pity or fear, and actions which arouse such emotions are the proper subject matter of tragedy. Besides, it will serve to bring about the issue of good or bad fortune. Since the anagnorisis, then, is a recognition of persons it may be that one is al-

ready known and the other discovered, or the recognition may be mutual. Thus Iphigenia was known to Orestes by the sending of the letter, whereas another act was necessary to reveal Orestes himself."<sup>21</sup>

Anagnorisis, in general, then is simply a transition from ignorance to knowledge, or, as Aristotle might put it in terms of his fundamental philosophical doctrine, a transition from potency to act in the order of cognition. It is misleading to translate ἀναγνώρισις by "recognition" when we use the word in this wider sense. Neither is it strictly accurate to say "the anagnorisis" since it is really something more than a single, disarticulated incident in the play. We do not say "the character" or "the thought" when we speak of character or thought as dramatic elements of tragedy. The better word and the one which is accepted by most scholars is discovery. Recognition implies a perception of the persistence of the Ego experiencing a present conscious state and being aware that in some way the thinking subject has had knowledge of a similar conscious state in the past.<sup>22</sup> Discovery, however, simply states that some new knowledge has been acquired. For the time being, this is the meaning of anagnorisis with which we are concerned.

The universal longing for knowledge is a keynote of Aristotle's whole philosophical system. "All men" he says, "by nature desire to know."<sup>23</sup> The gratification of this desire is the end of fine art just as it is the end of all metaphysical and scientific speculation. The good life, the εὖ ζῆν, is that which is lived in accord with this instinct, this passion for truth. Aesthetic enjoyment, the Scholastics

taught (and they, of all men, best knew the mind of Aristotle) is a kind of conscious inclination to the good, intellectually cognized.

Now anagnorisis, in its broad meaning of μεταβολὴ ἐξ ἀγνοίας εἰς γινῶσιν is essentially such an intellectual pleasure, with its root cause buried deep in that quality of human nature which Aristotle hints at when he says:

"To learn gives the most exquisite enjoyment, not only to philosophers but to men in general.... and the reason why men enjoy a work of imitative art is that while they look at it they learn and gather its meaning, saying perhaps (with a flash of recognition) 'Ah yes, that is he.'"24

Lane Cooper has written well on this aspect of anagnorisis. The passage is most pertinent and no apology need be offered for quoting it at length. He says, speaking of the Oedipus Tyrannus:

"Oedipus discovers, or thinks he discovers, all sorts of things true or untrue---that Creon is plotting against him; that Teiresias is basely involved in the plot; that he, the hero, could not have killed his father and married his mother, fulfilling the oracle, since he discovers that Polybus and Merope are dead; that the dead Polybus and Merope were not, after all, his parents; that the man he killed at the crossroads was his father and the queen he subsequently married, his mother; that, as Teiresias had said, he himself, Oedipus, is the accursed defiler of the land whom he has been seeking. 'Oedipus' is the final answer to the riddle of the Sphinx. All the while the unfamiliar, as it is added on, is converted into the familiar; the unexpected turns out to be the very thing we were awaiting, and the unknown stranger is seen to be the first born of the house---who must again become a stranger, and yet again seek a familiar

home and final resting-place, no longer at outlandish Thebes but here in the neighborhood of our own Athens, at the grove beloved of his and our poet. And all the while we, with Oedipus, desire further knowledge, and our desire, momentarily baffled, is as constantly satisfied---until the entire design of the poet is unfolded and we know all. Even when the knowledge is painful the satisfaction is a satisfaction. And for us, the spectators, the pain is tempered, since we behold it, not in real life, but in a spectacle whose close resemblance to reality---with a difference---keeps us inferring, and saying: 'Ah, so it is---just like human fortune and misfortune as we see it every day.' The story itself, being traditional, is familiar, yet odd, old and far away; and it now has an admixture of the strange and rare which only Sophocles could give it. How delightful to learn---to discover fundamental similarity under superficial difference!"<sup>25</sup>

In this generic sense, anagnorisis is to be found at the center of all tragedy, and one might, without putting too great a strain on the text of Aristotle, build up a very plausible dramatic theory with discovery as an essential feature of the tragic action. Every play is integrally and essentially constituted of rising action and catastrophe, complication of the plot and its resolution, misapprehension and enlightenment. Now the tragic story, according to Aristotle, turns on *ἁμαρτία*, which is most commonly taken to mean a mistake or error of judgment. Thus, the Oedipus of Sophocles is a man of quick and violent temper, but his *ἁμαρτία*, the *ἁμαρτία* which knots the plot, "is rather in the great mistake he made in slaying his father than in any ethical fault."<sup>26</sup>



This view is proposed by Lucian in the introduction to his essay on calumny. He writes:

"Ignorance is a dreadful thing and responsible for many human woes. It furnishes the tragedians countless subjects for their plays, such for example as the descendants of Labdacus and Pelops and others like to these. One would almost say that Ignorance, since it is the cause of most misfortune, presides over tragedy as a kind of divinity."<sup>27</sup>

Accordingly, since it is intellectual error, misapprehension and ignorance which initiate the dramatic conflict, knowledge of the truth must terminate it if justice is to be satisfied and our minds be at rest. "The anagnorisis is the realization of blindness, the opening of eyes which Ate (who hurts men's minds) or Fate, or just human weakness had sealed."<sup>28</sup>

The most succinct expression of this theory which I have been able to find is that of Prescott who declares:

"Aristotle represented ἀγνοια as the basis of the tragic plot; he referred to κίνδυνος, and it is reasonable to suppose that this κίνδυνος was an issue of the fundamental error or misapprehension; he presented a cathartic theory in which φόβος was an important element; in his theory mental error lead to tragic complications, determined the course of action, involved δίστις and πλοκή, which were disentangled (λύσις) by the discovery of the error (ἀνακάλυψις)."<sup>29</sup>

That Aristotle recognized some such meaning of anagnorisis is clear from his admission of "inanimate things even of a casual kind" as proper objects of discovery. We need not believe, however, that he is

speaking of anagnorisis in this broad sense when he discusses it as a distinct feature of his ideal tragedy. For him the best discovery is always a recognition scene wherein the identity of one or more persons is learned by one or more others. Whether we like it or not, Aristotle insists that this is the form of anagnorisis most directly connected with the plot, the form which will most surely arouse pity and fear.

He assumes this when, at 1454b19, he goes on to enumerate the six kinds of anagnorisis and to determine their relative value. In every case his examples of discovery are recognition scenes properly so called. For a better understanding of this technical aspect of anagnorisis and as a preparation for the second part of our thesis, where we shall hold to the more specific meaning of the term, let us examine this passage in greater detail. For ready reference the whole will be given in Appendix B.

### CHAPTER III

#### KINDS OF ANAGNORISIS

The first and least artistic form of recognition scene is that in which identity is established through signs and tokens which, at some time in the past, have been associated with the person who is recognized. Such signs (they are the "signa quae prius cognita ducunt in cognitionem alterius" of the Scholastics) are quite various. They may be congenital or acquired and the acquired may be either marks on the body---the lance head "which the earth born bear" and the "stars" which Carcinus mentions in his Thyestes are instanced---or external tokens of some kind.<sup>30</sup> These are all clumsy expedients of inferior or nodding poets, dragged in so frequently because of inability to construct recognition scenes which are the natural outcome of antecedent circumstances. Numerous examples of this first type might be given and in the second part of our thesis we shall discuss a very famous one, that of the Ion.

Besides his objection to the artificiality of ἀναγνώρισις διὰ σημείων, we may find a reason for Aristotle's criticism in his dislike of any discovery which involves a formal and lengthy reasoning process.<sup>31</sup> The recognition, to have greatest tragic effect, should burst upon us with a shock and not come after a great deal of wordy argument. In accordance with this principle Aristotle states that discovery through

signs is less reprehensible when it comes about naturally than when the signs are deliberately brought forward *πίστεως ἕνεκα*. Hence, for Aristotle, the recognition of Ulysses by Euryclia, immediately and spontaneously, is far superior to the earlier recognition by Eumaeus.

And again, Aristotle, no mean dialectician, might bring another objection against recognitions through signs in that they lend themselves so readily to fallaciae consequentis, illegitimate conclusions drawn from conditional syllogisms. A reductio ad absurdum of this is to be found in Sullivan's, Box and Cox:

If this man is my long lost brother he will have  
a strawberry mark on his left arm.  
But he has such a mark.  
Therefore he is my brother.

Thus in a lost work, *Ἀπορήματα Ὀμηρικά*, Aristotle declares that all the discoveries of Ulysses by means of his scar were based on the logical error of supposing that *πᾶς οὐλὴν ἔχων Ὀδυσσεύς ἐστίν*.<sup>32</sup>

The second form of recognition which Aristotle mentions is superior to the first but inferior to all the rest because it, too, is usually a formal declaration of identity and hence less likely to bring immediate credit, with the consequent shock of surprise. The discovery is described as one "made by the poet himself," but since every anagnorisis is the work of the man who conceives it, we must suppose with Twining that there is here the added idea of arbitrary discovery by the simple means of having the unknown openly declare his or her identity.<sup>33</sup> The examples which are proposed lend weight to this opinion and, indeed,

the verb ἀναγνωρίσειν he says:

"The simple verb γνωρίσειν has (just like our English 'discover') two meanings, that of 'to learn' (γινώσκειν) and that of 'to make known' (γνώριμον ποιεῖν, δηλοῦν). ἀναγνωρίσειν recalls both senses of γνωρίσειν, sometimes meaning 'to recognize' and sometimes 'to reveal'.....the word must mean 'to reveal' in 1454b32 ἀνεγνώρισε δ' ὅτι Ὀρέστας. 'manifestum fecit se esse Orestem' (Ritter)."<sup>35</sup>

It is unfortunate, however, that Bywater does not indicate the variant readings.

Tyrwhitt seems most sensible in his commentary on the question of just what "the voice of the shuttle" means. He writes:

"Mira sane commentus est Castelvetrus, mira etiam Jos. Scaliger.....ut explicent quam partem in fabulam Terei habuit ἡ τῆς κερκίδος φωνή, i.e. radii textorii vox; ut illi, alique omnes quos vidi interpretantur. Sed κερκίς non solum radium textorium, sed etiam ipsam telam aliquando significat.....Philomelae autem agnitionem (de qua hic loquitur Aristoteles) per telam, quam sorori suae misit, factam esse notissimum est.....Declaratio igitur per telam, enuntiata, nisi fallor, appellatur telae vox; metaphora certe audacior, et prosaico sermoni minus conveniente, sed quam in hoc loco ex ipsa tragoedia desumptam esse verisimiliter forte suspicemur."<sup>36</sup>

Twining objects that this interpretation is inconsistent with the type of anagnorisis which Aristotle is discussing since it was the current traditional story and could not have been "invented at pleasure by the poet."<sup>37</sup> An answer which really raises another question is given by

Hermann:

"Hyginus (fab. XLV) quum aliter rem narret, potuit recte Philomelae agnitio inter eas numerari, quae a poetis fictae sunt. Quamquam omnino non satis accurate haec definivit Aristoteles. Nam quidni a poetis fingi possint agnitiones, quae ex ipsa factorum contingentia occurrit?"<sup>38</sup>

But a truce to these "old, forgotten, far-off things, and battles long ago." They are interesting but, for the present, unnecessary and we must hasten on to consider the other types of anagnorisis which Aristotle enumerates.

The third species of discovery is *διὰ μνήμης*, where recognition is brought about by one's reaction to an incident which stirs the emotions through the revival of some previous experience. It is difficult to see the force of Bywater's argument that in Aristotle's illustrations "the emphasis is on the participles *ἰδών* and *ἀκούων*....*καὶ μνησθεῖς*, not on *ἐκλαυσεῖν* and *ἐδάκρυσεν*;" and that "the actual manifestations of the awakened memories (*ἐκλαυσεῖν*, *ἐδάκρυσεν*) are only the accidents, which happen to be found in the instances under consideration."<sup>39</sup> This would hardly make them recognition scenes since the past experience might readily be recalled but the emotion suppressed for the very purpose of avoiding recognition. Aristotle, it seems, is more interested in the display of feeling which discloses a man's identity than in the occasion which arouses it.

Apart from the accidental nature of anagnorisis *διὰ μνήμης* (and the accident, be it repeated, is in the occasion and not the display of

emotion) there is no reason why it should be criticized as an inferior form of discovery. Recognitions of such a kind are among the most natural and affecting incidents which literature offers us; and the value of any thing is determined by its effectiveness in doing what it is supposed to do. We need only recall the fourth book of the *Odyssey* where Menelaus recognizes Telemachus by the tears he sheds at the mention of his father. And the example which Aristotle himself uses, ἡ ἐν Ἀλκίνοῦ ἀπολογία is a beautiful instance in point. Both this and his illustration of the *Cyprians* of Dicaeogenes are probably taken from epic rather than tragic poetry (though Dicaeogenes is recorded only as a tragic and dithyrambic poet); but this presents no real difficulty since the parts of both epic and tragic poetry are essentially the same.<sup>40</sup>

The fourth and fifth forms of discovery are best taken together since each involves formal reasoning, the one by a true syllogism and the other by a false. They occasion the greatest difficulty to commentators and the details of neither are, as yet, perfectly understood. We cannot hope to do more, in the limits of this first part of our thesis, than indicate the problems they present and the solutions which seem most satisfactory.

It is pretty well agreed that ἀναγνώρισις ἐκ συλλογισμοῦ cannot mean a reasoning process on the part of the person who makes the discovery since every mode of recognition involves this. The premises will contain statements about the nature of signs or the authenticity of witnesses or the influence of emotions, but the conclusion is drawn, in all

instances, by the logical power of the mind, *ἐκ συλλογισμοῦ*. This difficulty is appreciated by Twining who offers the following solution:

"The discovery Aristotle means, is plainly a discovery, not made but occasioned, by inference. Throughout all his instances, he considers only the means or occasion of discovery as furnished, in some way or other, by the person discovered. With respect to bodily marks, bracelets and the like, the letter of Iphigenia and the verbal *τεκμήρια* or Orestes, this is obvious enough. But the case is the same with the discovery by memory: in both the examples of that species the persons are discovered, not by recollection in the discoverers, but by the effects of it in themselves. And so here, too, in the last three examples of discovery *ἐκ συλλογισμοῦ*, however obscure in other respects, this, at least, seems clearly enough expressed, that the persons are discovered by their own reasoning or inference; that is, by something which it leads them to say."<sup>41</sup>

This is clear enough and, perhaps, correct. It appears somewhat analogous to *ἀναγνώρισις διὰ μνήμης* where discovery occurs through the manifestation of emotions, that is, through something which a present experience leads one to do. It is important to note, though, that it is only "in the last three examples" of this form of discovery that we can admit the force of Twining's argument. If, however, we allow the first example which Aristotle proposes (that of the *Choephoroi*, which is certainly by a reasoning process on the part of the person making the discovery) to be explained away on the assumption that some other play, and not that of Aeschylus, is meant, we have as satisfactory an explanation as can be given of this troublesome passage.



But if Aristotle's treatise on discovery by correct reasoning is troublesome, his discussion of discovery by incorrect reasoning is simply unintelligible. Here all is mystery and the best we can do is to "make the darkness more visible." It is impossible even to summarize all that has been said on this question. The text is notoriously corrupt and one man's guess is as good as another's in deciding what the sense of the passage may be. Tyrwhitt says, with a modesty unusual in most editors, "Ex ipso quidem loco, uti hodie scribitur, neque hic neque ullus alius, opinor, commodus sensus elici potest."<sup>42</sup>

Among the latest attempts to elucidate this ἀναγνώρισις ἐκ παραλογισμοῦ are those of Lane Cooper and J. A. Smith who agree that much of the obscurity is removed if we translate συνθετή ("synthetic" or "composite") as "fictitious"---a meaning it has from the practice, common among raconteurs of "adding on" a little something in their telling of a tale. Understanding the word in this way and reading παραλογισμόν instead of the more usual παραλογισμός (at 1454a16), Cooper has, in his "amplified version":

"Related to discovery by inference is a kind of synthetic (or fictitious) discovery, where the poet causes A to be recognized through the false inference of B (or through a logical deception practised upon B by A). There is an example of this in Odysseus with the False Tidings. Here A says: 'I shall know the bow' (which he had not seen); but that B, forsooth, should recognize A through this is to represent a false inference (i.e., to poetize a paralogism)."<sup>43</sup>

According to this view then, the "recognition" is really no recognition at all. It is a simple case of mistaken identity, brought about by a deception which is practiced for the express purpose of avoiding discovery.

J. A. Smith is not so definite in his position, but states that the explanation given above (which he proposes as an alternate suggestion of his own, without mentioning it as Cooper's) is more tolerable than the usual way of taking it.<sup>44</sup>

It is futile, in our ignorance of the play Ulysses the False Messenger, to seek for light from it. The solution, if there be one, is to be found, we think, in a passage farther along in the Poetics where Aristotle treats of "the marvelous" in epic poetry. Again discussing the paralogism he writes:

"Homer more than any other has taught us the art of framing lies in the right way. I mean the use of paralogism. Whenever, if A is or happens, a consequent, B, is or happens, men's notion is that, if the B is, the A also is---but that is a false conclusion. Accordingly, if A is untrue, but there is something else, B, that on the assumption of its truth follows as its consequent, the right thing is to add on the B. Just because we know the truth of the consequent, we are in our own minds led on the erroneous inference of the truth of the antecedent." There is an instance from the Bath-story in the Odyssey."<sup>45</sup>

The point is this: in every conditional syllogism we must either affirm the antecedent and, hence, the consequent or deny the consequent and, hence, the antecedent also. There is no other possible way.<sup>46</sup> Given

the truth of B as the necessary result of A and given, also, the presence of A, we conclude correctly to the truth of B. But it does not follow that the truth of B always requires the presence of A. It might also, on occasion, come about from the presence of C. And again: given the falsity of a condition, A, depending on the falsity of the conditioned, B, and given also the present falsity of B we conclude correctly to the falsity of A. But it is illogical to say that B is false because A, in turn, is false. In this latter case there is no nexus.

Consequently, to bring about a false recognition through a false inference, one need only suggest the truth of B or the falsity of A and immediately most people jump to the conclusion that A is true or B is false. With this in mind, it is not difficult to reconstruct a possible plot for Ulysses the False Messenger.

Such a discovery is sometimes regarded as the illogical parallel of the preceding one and is directly connected with it by Vahlen who supposes that there is but a single anagnorisis through reasoning, which is called ἐκ συλλογισμοῦ when it is on the side of one party and ἐκ παραλογισμοῦ when it is on the side of the other: "ut ex simplici unius ratiocinatione prodire, ita composita esse potest alterius ex syllogismo, paralogismo alterius."<sup>47</sup> This is a tempting explanation but hardly seems to be substantiated by what Aristotle himself has written on the paralogism. And in the example from the play Ulysses the False Messenger there is nothing more implied than a false inference by one party from a statement made by the other.

It need hardly be mentioned that the first five species of recognition scenes all overlap and are, none of them, completely independent of those artificial means of discovery which betray the work of an inferior poet. The sixth and best form, however, is unique in that it arises, not from any arbitrary device of the poet, but as the natural result of all that has preceded. In it the identity of the unknown is revealed not by a scar, nor by his own declaration, nor by his manifestation of emotion, nor by a true or false syllogism, but rather through the necessary sequence of all the incidents which go to make up the plot and which bring about the great surprise *δὲ ξικότης*. As Cooper states:

"Here the action of the mind follows the very action of the play, and the pleasure of learning the particular identity is but one item in an orderly series--- in that passage from ignorance to knowledge which is effected by the work as a whole."<sup>48</sup>

Whereas the first five are all discoveries by inference of some kind, this last is entirely independent of such round-about and, all too often, tedious methods. We ourselves observe the inevitable progress of the plot; and the shock of discovery, when it comes, is brought about through sympathy for the complete reversal of the hero's fortune rather than through surprise at the occurrence of an event which we had not anticipated. The miscalculation is on the part of the protagonist, not the audience. The unconscious feeling of superiority which comes over us as we witness a scene of this kind gives us another possible explanation of the dramatic value of the anagnorisis.

Having considered various reasons for the importance of the anagnorisis in the eyes of Aristotle, the two meanings he attaches to it, the meaning which we have adopted and the kinds of recognitions which Aristotle discusses, we need not delay any longer over an elaborate statement of the dramatic value of the recognition scene. Its close connection with the ideal or complex plot and its significance in the important element of surprise we have already observed; its potentialities as a source of dramatic irony, suspense, sympathy and the tragic emotions of pity and fear will be indicated, as occasion offers, during the course of our study of the individual recognition scenes in Euripides.

## PART THE SECOND

### CHAPTER IV

#### ANALYSIS OF THE PLAYS OF EURIPIDES

It is not our purpose in the second part of this thesis to discuss the technical skill of Euripides; Neither do we propose to offer and defend some new theory in explanation of his powers as a playwright. Rather we shall endeavor to examine the recognition scenes of the various plays merely as instances of the great tragedian's admitted mastery of dramatic situation. When it is necessary or helpful we shall compare his usage of the anagnorisis with that of Aeschylus and Sophocles, though it is not our intention to draw any general conclusions from such comparisons or take issue with such statements as the following of a well known critic: "Euripides uses and misuses the recognition scene more than any other tragic poet."<sup>49</sup> That he uses the scene more, we have already affirmed; that he uses it effectively, we shall attempt to show in the succeeding pages; whether or no he uses it more effectively than Aeschylus or Sophocles does not concern us.

The general theory as to the use and value of the anagnorisis has been outlined in the first part of this thesis and consequently, as we

have said, it will not be necessary to dwell upon what constitutes a "misuse" or an effective use of such scenes. We must always remember, however, that Aristotle's treatise on this feature of the tragic plot is a commentary and evaluation of the methods employed by the most successful poets of his day, rather than a narrow set of arbitrary rules drawn up on a priori principles by some inexperienced theorist. It would be absurd to call a recognition scene ineffective because it is not in strict accord with what Aristotle holds up as the ideal. If it is logical and probable and sincere; if it contributes to tragic irony, arouses suspense, excites our pity, heightens our fear and shows us the fickleness of fortune in changes of joy to sorrow and sorrow to joy: then it is an effective anagnorisis, no matter to what class we must assign it. And, on the other hand, if it be inconsistent and unlikely---the clumsy, wordy last resort of one who is unable to find a more skillful solution for the complexities of his plot, we shall not hesitate to condemn it. The words of D. C. Stuart on this matter are pertinent here and may be taken as a norm for judging true merit in the construction of these scenes.

"The means by which the recognition is brought about cannot be judged by any abstract so-called artistic considerations. They must be judged by concrete considerations depending upon the particular dramatic considerations at hand."<sup>50</sup>

We shall examine only those plays of Euripides in which strict recognition scenes occur, and since in these plays there are frequently

two or three such scenes, we shall confine our attention to the one which is most closely connected with the plot. In order to furnish the setting of these scenes it will be necessary, in each case, to give a brief outline of the plot or at least to indicate the antecedent circumstances which lead up to the recognition.

### I The Hecuba

The Hecuba is one of the first extant tragedies of Euripides in which a strict recognition scene occurs. We need not delay long over this scene. It comes as the climax in the long series of the Trojan Queen's misfortunes and is largely responsible for the turn which is taken in the second half of the tragedy. It will be recalled that after the sack of Troy the Grecian fleet was long detained in the Thracian Chersonese where the ghost of Achilles had appeared and demanded that Polyxena, the daughter of Priam, be sacrificed at his tomb. The sacrifice takes place and Hecuba, whose helpless distress dominates the play, dispatches a servant to the seashore for water to wash the body and prepare it for burial. The handmaid comes upon the body of Polydorus, the youngest of Priam's sons, floating in the waves. The boy had been sent to Polymestor for protection before the fall of Troy, but the avaricious king had proved faithless and slain him for his gold. Wrapping the body in a cloth, the handmaid returns with it to Hecuba and it is here that the recognition scene begins. The servant opens the scene with the cry:

Queen, thou art slain; thou seest the light no more  
Unchilded, widowed, cityless---all destroyed!



Hecuba, thinking she refers to past misfortunes, answers:

No news but this: 'tis taunting me who knew.  
But wherefore com'st thou bringing me this corpse,  
Polyxena's, whose burial-rites, 'twas told,  
By all Achaea's host were being sped?

They continue:

- S. She nothing knows; Polyxena---ah me!---  
Still wails she, and the new woes graspeth not.
- H. O hapless I! ---not, not the bacchant head  
Of prophetess Cassandra bring'st thou hither?
- S. Thou nam'st the living: but the dead, this dead  
Bewaillest not; look, the dead form is bared!  
(Uncovers the corpse)
- Seems it not strange, worse than all boding fears?
- H. Ah me, my son! I see Polydorus dead,  
Whom in his halls I deemed the Thracian warded.  
O wretch! It is my death---I am no more.<sup>51</sup>

Pity is the predominant element in this recognition scene. Hecuba has lost her husband and her throne. Her daughters have been carried into slavery and she herself is now a slave. Polyxena has been sacrificed in cold blood before the eyes of the Grecian host. Her sons, one after another, have fallen in battle before the walls of Troy---all but Polydorus whose supposed safety affords her her only consolation. The Hecuba is not a great play, but it does represent the extreme of mental anguish, and this extreme is reached in the cruel shock of pain which staggers the afflicted queen when the shrouded form is uncovered and the corpse of Polydorus is revealed. It is easy to see how deeply this scene would move the feelings of the audience. The fact that the spectators know what to expect is unimportant. In this connection Professor Haigh says very well:

"The purpose of Greek tragedy, in its highest efforts, was inconsistent with the excitement which is caused by curiosity. The favorite and most impressive theme of the old tragic poets was the irony of destiny, and the futility of human wisdom... The intense and absorbing interest of such a spectacle, in which the audience, witnessing the events in the light of full knowledge, were able to realize the vanity of the victim's hopes, and to perceive how each sanguine effort was only bringing him closer to the abyss, more than compensated for the absence of suspense concerning the nature of the issue; and the tragic stage has produced nothing, in the whole course of its history, that could be more thrilling and more impressive than these dark pictures of the inflexibility of the gods."<sup>52</sup>

## II The Alcestis

A recognition of the same general character but with a totally different dramatic effect is to be found in the Alcestis. The scenes are similar in that recognition is spontaneous once initial disbelief is overcome; they differ in the opposite results which they produce. In the Hecuba the recognition is used as an exciting force in the rising action, whereas in the Alcestis it takes the place of the Theophany in ending the play on that note of calm which is so characteristic of Greek tragedy.

The plot of the play hardly needs repetition. Admetus, king of Thessaly, was fated to die on an appointed day, but in return for his former piety was permitted to find a substitute. After his father and mother refuse, his young wife, Alcestis, gladly consents to die in his place. Hercules, the wandering hero, visits the house seeking hospitality, learns the state of affairs and goes out to the tomb of Alcestis

to wrestle with death and restore the devoted wife to her sorrowing husband. He succeeds and returns with Alcestis, heavily veiled and, consequently, unknown to Admetus. A lengthy recognition scene follows, until at last Alcestis' veil is drawn aside and Admetus realizes that his wife has really returned. The play ends with the chorus triumphantly praising the wisdom and works of the gods.

There are widely divergent opinions on the merits of the recognition scene in the Alcestis. Verrall and his brilliant follower, Gilbert Norwood, find it stilted and absurd. Norwood writes: "The poorness of the last scene may be no cunning device, but comparative poverty of inspiration."<sup>53</sup> It cannot be denied that it is somewhat long and not entirely the logical outgrowth, the necessary resolution, of what has gone before. It seems to be brought in too much for its own sake, too much for the opportunity it affords of unconscious irony in the speeches of Admetus and his anxiety to rid himself of the presence of one who so forcibly reminds him of his wife.

A possible explanation of Euripides' insistence on this scene may be found in a desire to punish Admetus for his selfishness in permitting his wife to substitute herself and die for him. With this as a link connecting the recognition with the rest of the play we shall not be so inclined to criticize the poet for the lengths to which he has gone in portraying the weakness of Admetus and the otherwise tasteless mysteriousness of Hercules. The joy of the husband in the final recognition of his wife is genuine enough and it is this, perhaps, which leads

Professor Haigh to the rather strong statement that, "Every critic has admired the pathos and dramatic effect of the final scene, in which Alcestis is brought back disguised as a stranger, and received at first with reluctance, until she is gradually recognized."<sup>54</sup> A short quotation at the close of this scene will make this clear.

- A. O that in strife thou ne'er hadst won this maid.  
 H. Yet thy friend's victory is surely thine.  
 A. Well said: yet let the woman hence depart.  
 H. Yea, if need be. First look well—need it be?  
 A. Needs must, save thou wilt else be wroth with me.<sup>55</sup>

Admetus finally consents to receive Alcestis into his house, though he still believes her the captive prize of Hercules.

- H. Be strong; stretch forth thine hand and touch thy guest.  
 A. I do, as one who doth behead a Gorgon. (Turning his face away.)  
 H. Hast her?  
 A. I have.  
 H. Yea. Guard her. Thou shalt call the child of Zeus one day a noble guest. (Discloses Alcestis.)  
 Look on her, if in aught she seems to thee  
 Like to thy wife. Step forth from grief to bliss.  
 A. What shall I say? Gods! Marvel this unhop'd for!  
 .....  
 O dearest wife! Sweet face! Beloved form!  
 Past hope I have thee! Never I thought to see thee.<sup>56</sup>

Here, certainly, is that change from grief to joy which evidences so clearly the variability of men's fortunes, a theme dear to the heart of every Greek.

### III The Helen

The Helen is not a tragedy in the strict sense of the word. It would better be called a kind of melodramatic romance. Euripides, follow-

ing the lead of Stesichorus and Herodotus, has adopted a variant of the legend about Helen. In his play the true Helen is borne away to Egypt by the god Hermes, and a phantom image is all that Paris brings with him to Troy. After the fall of Troy, Menelaus, with this phantom, is wrecked on the shore of Egypt where he meets his true wife who has fled to the tomb of Proteus to avoid a marriage with Theoclymenus, the cruel king of the land. The recognition, after a painful period of suspense, is mutual, and husband and wife, restored to one another, set about seeking a means of escape—and this they ultimately find.

This play is undoubtedly the most fanciful and inventive of all the works of Euripides. The interest is wholly in the plot, and the drama is all but characterless. The one place where the characters do come out clearly is in the recognition scene. Here we see the anxious husband, doubting the evidence of his senses but eager to believe that, after all, his wife is faithful. Here, also, we see the devoted wife shunning a second marriage and yearning to return to her true husband's arms. The skillful way in which suspense is created in this scene is worthy of note. Professor Norwood is alone in holding that "the possibility of pathos is drowned in absurdity."<sup>57</sup> Suspense is aroused at the outset when Menelaus is wrecked on the shores of Egypt where, the audience knows, Helen is living; it is heightened when the two meet. They notice a resemblance:

- M. Who art thou, lady? Whose the face I see?  
 H. Who thou? The selfsame cause I have to ask.  
 M. Never yet saw I form more like to hers.  
 H. Oh gods! For God moves in recognition of friends.

- M. A Greek art thou, or daughter of the land?  
 H. A Greek: thy nation, too, I fain would learn.  
 M. Thou art very Helen, lady, to mine eyes. 58  
 H. And thou Menelaus! I know not what to say.

But Menelaus is not yet convinced, bethinking himself of that other Helen with whom he came to Egypt. His wife tries to prove her identity, telling him:

To Troy I went not: that a phantom was. 59

Menelaus is not to be persuaded and is turning away in sorrow when a messenger arrives telling him that the other Helen has vanished and that his own wife, "Tyndarus' sad daughter bears an ill name all for naught." 60 This is proof positive for Menelaus, and lengthy protestations of recognition follow at last.

The scene undeniably arouses our sympathies. After seventeen long years the fortunes of Helen seem due to change at last; and still Menelaus is so slow to believe in her, so determined to return to a vain shadow and leave his own true wife to her cruel fate---himself missing the great good fortune which is within his grasp. The whole scene is an interesting one and the dialogue is lively throughout. Like so many of Euripides' recognitions this, too, is used as an exciting force in the rising action rather than a mere expedient in the resolution of the plot.

#### IV Iphigeneia in Tauris

The recognition scene in this beautiful play has been called the finest in all tragedy.<sup>61</sup> It is chosen by Aristotle as the model of a mutual discovery;<sup>62</sup> as an instance of the ideal tragic situation<sup>63</sup> and the

sixth (and best) form of recognition<sup>64</sup> that, namely, which arises from the very incidents themselves. Norwood says that it is, perhaps, "the most brilliant piece of construction in Euripides."<sup>65</sup>

Using a different version of the myth than that which he had employed in his Iphigeneia at Aulis, Euripides tells us, in the Prologue, which is spoken by Iphigeneia herself, that in the very act of sacrifice on the altar at Aulis, Artemis intervened, putting a hind in the place of the maid and transporting Iphigeneia herself to the land of the Taurians and making her her priestess there, with the duty of sacrificing all strangers who came to the land. In the meantime, Orestes is ordered by Apollo to go to Tauris and steal the statue of Artemis as a price of his purification. Orestes sets out, accompanied by Pylades, is captured and brought before Iphigeneia to be sacrificed.

The events immediately preceding the anagnorisis are worthy of note for their magnificent irony. Before proceeding with her grim task, Iphigeneia examines the prisoners, asking them their names and place of birth:

Who was your mother, she who gave you birth?  
Your sire? Your sister, who? if such there be;  
Of what fair brethren shall she be bereaved,  
Brotherless now...Who knoweth upon whom  
Such fates shall fall?<sup>66</sup>

Orestes, wishing to die nameless, refuses to tell:

My body thou shalt slaughter, not my name.<sup>67</sup>

As a favor to the priestess, however, he consents to say that Argos is his native land and Mycenae the city of his birth. Iphigeneia then seeks

to learn the fate of Troy and Helen and the Grecian chiefs. There is a faint foreshadowing of the recognition in the lines:

- I. Came Helen back to Menelaus' home?
- O. She came---for evil unto kin of mine.
- I. Where is she? Evil debt she oweth me.<sup>68</sup>

And again, in inquiring after Agamemnon, she touches close to home:

- I. What of her war-chief, named the prosperous?
- O. Who? of the prosperous is not he I know.
- I. One King Agamemnon, Atreus' scion named.
- O. I know not. Lady, let his story be.
- I. Nay, tell, by heaven, that I be gladdened, friend.
- O. Dead, hapless king! and perished not alone.
- I. Dead, is he? By what fate? Ah woe is me!
- O. Why dost thou sigh thus? Is he kin to thee?
- I. His happiness of old days I bemoan.

.....

- I. And lives the dead king's son in Argos yet?
- O. He lives, unhappy, nowhere, everywhere.<sup>69</sup>

Iphigeneia then desires to communicate with her family at Mycenae and determines to send a letter to Orestes, by Orestes! Pylades must remain to be sacrificed. The well known contest of the friends occurs and Iphigeneia, moved by the noble devotion of Orestes, cries out:

Oh noble spirit! From what princely stock  
Hast thou sprung, thou so loyal to thy friends!  
Even such be he that of my father's house  
Is left alive! For, stranger, brotherless  
I too am not, save that I see him not.<sup>70</sup>

Pylades finally consents to bear the letter, and the recognition appears thwarted as Iphigeneia retires into the house. Upon her return with the letter, preparations for the sacrifice move forward rapidly and Orestes, true Greek to the last, asks:

- O. And what tomb shall receive me, being dead?
- I. A wide rock-rift within, and holy fire.



- O. Would that a sister's hand might lay me out!  
 I. Vain prayer, unhappy, whosoe'er thou be,  
 Thou prayest. Far she dwells from this wild land.<sup>71</sup>

The letter is given to Pylades but, for fear he lose it, Iphigeneia tells him its contents. With her opening words the recognition is assured:

- I. Say to Orestes, Agamemnon's son---  
 "This Iphigeneia, slain in Aulis, sends,  
 Who liveth, yet for those at home, lives not."  
 O. Where is she? Hath she risen from the dead?  
 I. She whom thou seest; confuse me not with speech:  
 "Bear me to Argos, brother, ere I die;  
 From this wild land, these sacrifices, save,  
 Wherein mine office is to slay the stranger:"  
 O. What shall I say? Now dream we Pylades?  
 I. "Else to thine house will I become a curse,  
 Orestes"—so, twice heard, hold fast the name.  
 O. Gods!<sup>72</sup>

Orestes, beside himself with joy, embraces Iphigeneia, but she, thinking the whole thing some stratagem, demands formal proof of his identity. The dialogue which follows is haunted, as Professor Murray says, "not like a tragedy, by the shadow of death, but rather by the shadow of homesickness."<sup>73</sup>

- I. What sayest thou? Hast thou proof hereof for me?  
 O. I have. Ask somewhat of our father's house.  
 I. Now nay; 'tis thou must speak, 'tis I must learn.  
 O. First will I name this—from Electra heard---  
 Know'st thou of Atreus' and Thyestes' feud?  
 I. I heard, how of a golden lamb it came.  
 O. This, broidered in thy web rememberst thou?  
 I. Dearest, thy chariot wheels roll nigh my heart!  
 O. And pictured in thy loom, the sun turned back?  
 I. This too I wrought with fine spun broidery threads.<sup>74</sup>

A few more recollections, and the recognition is complete. There follows a tender passage between brother and sister:

- I. Dearest! naught else, for thou art passing dear!  
 Orestes, best beloved, I clasp thee now,  
 Far from thy fatherland, from Argos, here  
 Oh love, art thou!
- O. And thee I clasp, the dead, as all men thought.  
 Tears, that are no tears, ecstasy blent with moan,  
 Make happy mist in thine eyes as in mine.<sup>75</sup>

Iphigeneia's doubt and her demand for formal proof is not, as Professor Perrin thinks, "chilling, mechanical and calculating."<sup>76</sup> It is just what any sensible person would do under the circumstances. She has every reason to believe that the stranger is employing a clever ruse to escape death. Orestes' recognition of her was managed in the most indirect and unconscious way that one could ask. But is there any less artistry in the more elaborate scene, where brother and sister, both longing for peace and rest after all their trials, speak to each other so eagerly, so tenderly, of home and childhood? Aristotle thinks there is<sup>77</sup> but we are more inclined to concur in the judgment of Professor Haigh, who writes:

"The celebrated scene in which Iphigeneia is about to sacrifice her brother, the fatality which seems perpetually to intervene, just when they are on the very brink of mutual recognition, the long suspense, the various unexpected turns of fortune, and then at length the disclosure of the letter's contents, the revelation of the kinship, and the ecstatic joy of brother and sister, constitute one of the greatest triumphs of dramatic art."<sup>78</sup>

#### V The Ion

It would be impossible to overestimate the importance of the anagnorisis in this play. There are at least two true recognition scenes; and discovery, in the broader sense, plays an ever active role in the

development of the plot. The whole drama hinges on the fate of Ion, will he or will he not discover his parentage? Here is the beginning of a new motif in Greek tragedy; and curiosity, for the first time, begins to occupy a prominent place in the drama. Will the false recognition by Xuthus of Ion as his son remain unchallenged or will it persist and add still further to the misfortunes of Creusa? Will Creusa really poison her son? Will Ion slay his mother, when her plot to end his life fails? These and similar questions must have entered the minds of the audience when the play was first produced; that audience which knew so well Euripides' freedom with old legends and his flair for the unexpected. With Aeschylus and Sophocles one could be sure that, in the end, the truth would out. But Euripides! Who could be sure what he would do? Who knew what novel turn he might not give to the most hackneyed plot? Strange that this fertile genius did not realize the truly pathetic potentialities in a frustrated recognition!

In its essentials, the plot of the Ion is an old one. The story of an earthly maid, ravished by a god and bearing a son in secret, is one of the most common tales in mythology. In the story of Ion, the god is Apollo and the maid Creusa, an Athenian princess. In her terror after the birth of her child, Creusa exposes the babe, which is rescued by Apollo and taken to Delphi to serve as minister in the temple there. After the lapse of years, Creusa and Xuthus, whom she has married, come to Delphi to seek some remedy for their childlessness. Mother and son meet and are strangely attracted. The recognition almost occurs at this

point, in the beautiful and pathetic scene between the two. The passage is too long to quote in full and to give brief extracts would only mutilate it.

After the false recognition, through a paralogism, of Ion by Xuthus as his son, the love of Creusa for the stranger lad turns to hate and, in a fit of jealous rage, she determines to poison him. The plot is discovered, and Ion comes with a band of Delphinians to capture and slay her. Here, again, we have the ideal situation for a recognition—a dreadful deed about to be done in ignorance and averted only by the anagnorisis. The quarrel between Ion and Creusa which precedes the recognition is remarkable for the bitter irony of almost every word:

- C. I warn thee, slay me not—for mine own sake,  
And the god's sake, upon whose fane we stand!
- I. Phoebus and thou! What part hast thou in Phoebus?
- C. Myself I give to the god, a sacred thing.
- I. Thou sacred? who didst poison the god's child?
- C. Thou Loxias' child! His never, but thy sire's.
- I. His I became while father I had none.
- C. Aye, then: now, I am his, thou his no more.
- I. Blasphemer! His? His reverent child was I.
- C. I did but seek to slay mine house's foe.<sup>79</sup>

And when the recognition does come it is joined perfectly with a complete reversal of situation; they who a moment before had been the fiercest of enemies now embrace each other tenderly; all suspense is over and, for dramatic purposes, the play is finished.

The method by which recognition is effected is noteworthy. Aristotle, as we have seen, thought anagnorisis by means of signs and tokens the least artistic form of discovery, and the present play may be criti-

cized on this score by the modern reader also. It may be questioned, though, whether the lengthy, formal proof robbed the scene of dramatic interest in the eyes of the Greeks. An unbiased reading would lead one to think that it did not. The recognition proceeds as follows. Creusa, when she exposed her child, wrapped it in a shawl of her own weaving and left in its cradle certain childish toys and trinkets. These remained in the possession of the Pythia at Delphi who brings them to Ion as he stands, eager to slay his mother. Creusa recognizes the cradle in which she set her baby forth, breaks from the altar where she had sought sanctuary and flings her arms about the neck of Ion. But the angry son will have none of this and demands strict proof of Creusa's claims:

- I. I thy beloved, whom thou wouldst slay by stealth?
- C. Yes! Yes! My son! Is aught to parents dearer?
- I. Cease. I shall take thee 'mid thy webs of guile.
- C. Take me? Ah, take! I strain thereto, my child.
- I. Void is this ark, or somewhat doth it hide?
- C. Yea, that which wrapped thee when I cast thee forth.
- I. Speak out and name them ere thine eyes behold.
- C. Yea, if I tell not, I submit to die.
- I. Say on: 'tis passing strange, thy confidence.
- C. See there the web I wove in childhood's days.
- I. Its fashion? Girls be ever weaving webs.
- C. No perfect work; 'twas but the prentice hand.
- I. The pattern tell; thou shalt not trick me so.
- C. A Gorgon in the mid threads of a shawl.
- I. O Zeus, what weird is this that dogs our steps?
- C. 'Tis fringed with serpents, with the Aegis fringe.
- I. Lo, here the web! (Lifts and spreads it forth.)
- C. O work of girlhood's loom, so long unseen!
- I. Is there aught else, or this thy one shot true?
- C. Serpents, an old device, with golden jaws---  
Athena's gift, who biddeth deck babes so---  
Moulded from Erechthonius' snakes of old.
- I. What use, what purpose, tell me, hath the jewel?
- C. A necklace for the new born babe, my child.
- I. Even these be here. The third I long to know.

- C. A wreath of olive set I on thee then:  
 Athena brought it first unto our rock.  
 If this be there it hath not lost its green,  
 But blooms yet, from the sacred olive sprung.
- I. Mother! dear mother! glad, Oh glad, I fall  
 Beholding thee, on thy cheeks, gladness flushed.<sup>80</sup>

We shall not concern ourselves with Professor Verrall's ingenious explanation of this scene. He needs it to fit his own peculiar theory of the play, and it stands or falls with this theory. A more pertinent study would be the tracing of Euripidean influence on New Comedy through such recognition scenes as this of the Ion. It is likely that such influence did have its part in determining the form and subject matter of New Comedy. The orthodox pattern, found so often in Menander, of the violation of a girl, exposure of her child and its subsequent recognition by means of various ἀναγνωρίσματα is used only once in Aeschylus and Sophocles (in the Tyros of Sophocles). Euripides seems to have popularized the form, using it in at least five of his lost plays besides here in the Ion. Further evidence of this influence is to be found in Satyrus' life of Euripides where we read: "Peripeties, violations of virgins, exposures of children and recognitions of children by means of rings and necklaces—these are the frequent occurrences of New Comedy which Euripides first used to such good effect."<sup>81</sup> The abuse of this form which soon supervened may be a reason why all recognition scenes have fallen into disrepute, among some critics, as artificial and lifeless conventions.

## VI The Electra

The anagnorisis of the Electra is interesting chiefly for the comparison it permits us to draw between Euripides' handling of the scene and the treatment of a similar situation in the Choephoroe of Aeschylus and the Electra of Sophocles. Much learned ink has been spilled in discussing the relative merits of these three plays, and the basis of comparison has frequently rested on the firm foundation of the anagnorisis, that is to say, the different coloring which is given the discovery by the three poets. Now it would be the sheerest partisanship to hold seriously that the Electra of Euripides is superior to the two plays of his great predecessors. In general, all-round excellence, it simply cannot approach them. But to base this opinion on the "firm foundation of the anagnorisis" is dangerous, if not utterly mistaken. A brief examination of these scenes will make this clear.

The anagnorisis in the Choephoroe has been criticized as in-artistic from the time of Euripides down to our own day. In it Orestes, upon reaching Argos, goes with Pylades to the tomb of Agamemnon and lays upon it, as an offering, a long lock of his hair. Electra, coming with other libation bearers to the tomb, is recognized *ἑκ συλλογισμοῦ* by Orestes who uses, as premises in his reasoning, her leadership of the slaves and the prayer which she offers for her brother. He withdraws to one side and Electra, coming to the tomb, discovers the lock of hair and, nearby, footprints which exactly match her own. Orestes then steps forth and announces himself as the brother for whose return she has been

praying. Aristotle instances this as a discovery through reasoning and has Electra say: "One like me is here; there is no one like me but Orestes; he, therefore, must be here."<sup>82</sup> It is hard to say which is more naive, the absurd similarity of hair and footprint in the brother and sister or the illogical conclusion which Electra draws from it. Writing of this scene Professor Perrin says: "The proof to Electra of the identity of Orestes is so artificial as to be ridiculous, and easily lends itself to travesty."<sup>83</sup> Perrin goes on to explain the scene by saying that we must remember the incident is a minor one, preliminary to the greater scenes to follow, and also that the lock of hair and footprints and woven robe were all probably fixed features in the ancient myth which Aeschylus dramatized. We may conclude that he made a dramatic best of cumbersome material; feeling, however, that even such charity cannot make the scene seem less than absurd. It is astonishing to find Aristotle placing it in a class which he ranks second in point of artistic excellence.

The scene is managed more successfully by Sophocles. In his play the servant of Orestes first appears, disguised and bringing a false report of his master's death. Orestes himself then arrives, also disguised and bearing an urn which is supposed to contain his own ashes. There ensues the famous scene in which Electra, taking the urn, bewails the death of her brother with such intense passion that he cannot contain himself any longer and is compelled to reveal his identity before he had intended. The scene is undeniably one of great beauty, but it is doubtful whether this comes from the skillful use of anagnorisis as a



dramatic device so much as from Sophocles' consummate mastery of language.

Professor Stuart thinks it due to skillful use of anagnorisis. He writes:

"In the Sophoclean version each of the principle characters is ignorant of the identity of the other and thus there is a strong possibility that the recognition may not take place.....also in the Sophoclean play, the audience awaits with pleasurable expectation the joy of Electra when she finds that Orestes is alive. The scene is difficult to equal in its suspense and sympathy. It rises in perfect gradation in intensity to the climax, when Orestes, convinced by Electra's grief of her identity, discloses himself."<sup>84</sup>

Professor Perrin finds a jarring note in the appeal which Orestes makes to Agamemnon's signet ring as a direct proof of his identity. He says:

"It comes right in the flow of ardent feeling which is sweeping Electra (and the audience or reader) on to completed recognition; completed, for the royal bearing, the tender sympathy of the disguised Orestes have already opened her heart's door to the entering in of a loved brother's personality. Indirect persuasion of Electra that the pretended messenger was really Orestes would have better satisfied modern art and a modern audience."<sup>85</sup>

Euripides' treatment of the recognition, though it lacks the passionate appeal of the Sophoclean scene, is in no sense inferior to it as a brilliant coup de theatre. With his usual daring he has considerably altered the original story to suit his psychological and didactic purposes. Electra has been married to a peasant of the country, for fear that if she married a man of noble rank she would give birth to a son who might some day prove the avenger of Agamemnon. She is living in pov-

erty and hardship when Orestes and Pylades return to Argos. They meet her and recognize her from a lamentation which she sings. At this point the peasant husband returns and, learning that the strangers bring news of Orestes, invites them into the house. An old servant is summoned to bring meat and cheese and wine from his farm. Upon his arrival he recounts that, as he turned aside for a moment to weep at the tomb of Agamemnon, he found there certain sacrificial offerings including severed locks of hair. And here Euripides forgets his art to indulge in pungent criticism of the means to which Aeschylus had resorted in constructing the recognition scene of his Choephoroe. The servant suggests that the hair, since it resembles that of Electra in color, may be that of Orestes. She chides him for his foolishness:

Not worthy a wise man, ancient, be thy words---  
 To think mine aweless brother would have come,  
 Fearing Aegisthus, hither secretly.  
 Then how should tress be matched with tress of hair;  
 That, a young noble's trained in athlete strife,  
 This, womanlike, comb-sleeked? It cannot be.  
 Sooth, many shouldst thou find of hair like-hued,  
 Though of the same blood, ancient, never born.<sup>86</sup>

But the old servant insists:

- S. A sandal's print is there: go, look thereon,  
 Child: mark if that foot's contour match thine own.  
 E. How on a stony plain should there be made  
 Impress of feet? Yea, if such print be there,  
 Brother's and sister's foot should never match---  
 A man's and woman's: greater is the male.<sup>87</sup>

And, an added jest at another of Aeschylus' tokens:

- S. Is there no weft of thine own loom, whereby  
 To know thy brother, if he should return---  
 Wherein I stole him, years ago, from death?

E. Know'st thou not, when Orestes fled the land  
 I was a child? Yea, had I woven vests,  
 How should that lad the same cloak wear today,  
 Except, as waxed the body, vestures grew?<sup>88</sup>

Orestes and Pylades then enter and the old servant recognizes them immediately. As a more rational means of convincing the sceptical Electra, Euripides uses a bodily sign.

E. What token hast thou marked, that I may trust?  
 S. A scar along his brow: in his father's halls  
 Chasing with thee a fawn, he fell and gashed it.  
 E. How sayest thou? Yea, I see the mark thereof!  
 S. Now, art thou slow to embrace thy best-beloved?  
 E. No, ancient, no! By all thy signs convinced  
 Mine heart is. Thou who hast at last appeared,  
 Unhoped I clasp thee!<sup>89</sup>

Placing these scenes side by side and studying them carefully, we see no inferiority in the work of Euripides. Dramatically, at least, his anagnorisis is superior to that of Aeschylus and equal to that of Sophocles. He holds off Orestes' recognition by Electra until he has completely utilized the possibilities of suspense in the situation and heightened to the full the sympathy of the audience for his heroine. And the greater credibility which he secures in his ultimate recognition is certainly excuse enough for the liberties which he takes with the "token" feature of the original myth.

## VII The Bacchae

The last recognition which we have to consider is that of the Bacchae, the most fearsome and terrible in all the plays of Euripides. Whereas in most of his works, as we have seen, Euripides uses the anagnorisis as a means of initiating his plot or as a condition, if not a

cause, of the denouement, here he seems to introduce it solely for its powerful tragic effect and the tremendous force of its emotional appeal. Here there is no such trivial element as curiosity, no mere suspense or passing sympathy, but rather the deepest feeling of pity for the fate of the players and an abiding personal fear gnawing at the hearts of the spectators; a fear that a similar fate, born of their own culpable neglect and vincible ignorance, coming on unawares, may strike at their own lives and blast their own fortunes—leaving them, as Cadmus and Agave, bruised and broken and all alone.

The scene is not a long one but in it is concentrated all the force of Euripidean irony and all the power of Euripidean passion. It will be recalled that Pentheus, king of Thebes, resisting and mocking the new worship of Dionysus, had gone, disguised as a woman, to spy upon the revels of the Bacchantes. He is observed by the frenzied women who, in their god-inspired madness, seize upon him and tear him limb from limb. His mother, Agave, is the leader of the troupe and she, grasping the bleeding head of her son, rushes forth on the stage in triumph to show her prize to the Chorus, calling it a lion's head, the trophy of her hunt. Cadmus, her aged father, enters with a number of attendants who bear upon a covered litter the remains of the slaughtered king.

The blind pride and the mistaken joy of Agave's opening words are simply awe-inspiring:

My father, proudest boast is thine to make,  
To have begotten daughters best by far  
Of mortals; all thy daughters, chiefly me,

Me who left loom and shuttle, and pressed on  
 To high emprise, to hunt beasts with mine hands.  
 And in mine arms I bring, thou seest, this  
 The prize I took, against thy palace-wall  
 To hang: receive it, father, in thine hands.<sup>90</sup>

Cadmus can only bewail the cruel fate of Pentheus and the misfortunes which have fallen upon himself and Agave:

- C. O anguish measureless that blasts the sight!  
 O murder compassed by those wretched hands!  
 Fair victim this to cast before the gods,  
 And bid to such a banquet Thebes and me.  
 Woe for our sorrows! First for thine, then mine!  
 How hath the god, King Bromius, ruined us!  
 Just stroke, yet ruthless, is he not our kin?
- X. How sour of mood is graybeard eld in men,  
 How sullen-eyed! Framed in his mother's mold  
 A mighty hunter may my son become,  
 When with the Theban youths he speedeth forth  
 Questing the quarry. But he can do naught  
 Save with the gods to war. Father, thy part it is  
 To warn him. Who will call him hitherward  
 To see me, and behold mine happiness?<sup>91</sup>

And thus we are prepared for the recognition which is so soon to follow. Agave up to this point has been exultant; and the emotional shock which follows when she realizes what it is that she is holding in her hands and what a crime she herself has committed, is due entirely to Euripides' skillful use of contrast in building up his anagnorisis. The situation here corresponds exactly to that which Aristotle prizes as being ἐκ-πληκτικός. The unhold deed is done in ignorance and, afterwards, "the discovery serves to astound us."<sup>92</sup>

Cadmus speaks to Agave, gradually quiets her and persuades her to examine more closely the grim trophy which she is so happily bearing in her hands:

- C. Whose head, whose, art thou bearing in thine arms?  
 A. A lion's---so said they which hunted it.  
 C. Look well thereon: small trouble this, to look.  
 A. Ah-h! What do I see? What bear I in mine hands?  
 C. Gaze, gaze on it, and be thou certified.  
 A. I see---mine uttermost anguish! Woe is me!  
 C. Seems it to thee now like a lion's head?  
 A. No, wretched, wretched! Pentheus' head I hold!  
 C. Of me bewailed, ere recognized of thee.  
 A. Who murdered him? How came he to mine hands?  
 C. O piety! Truth so untimely dawns!  
 A. Speak; hard my heart beats, waiting for its doom.  
 C. Thou! Thou! And those thy sisters murdered him.<sup>93</sup>

The bitter truth is out at last. Other misfortunes will come, exile and death in foreign lands, but here is the peak of tragedy in the play; the peak of tragedy, perhaps, in all the work of Euripides.

Professor Gilbert Murray and others find in the Bacchae and its recognition scene, confirmation of their rationalistic explanations of the origin and essential nature of Greek Tragedy.<sup>94</sup> This confidence appears misplaced. Indeed, an examination of the anagnorisis in this play exposes a fundamental weakness of the whole theory. According to Mr. Murray, tragedy is an outgrowth of the old ritual dance or Sacer Ludus, and the anagnorisis is merely a remnant of the Theophany in this primitive religious exercise. The Daimon, usually Dionysus, is represented as undergoing various mutilations and sufferings with a resurrection and recognition as the culmination of the piece. In applying this to the Bacchae, the one play which should substantiate the theory if there be any truth in it at all, Mr. Murray is forced to identify Pentheus, who suffers and is recognized, with Dionysus, around whose worship the play centers. Mr. Pickard-Cambridge's criticism of this particular weakness is

devastating indeed. He writes:

"If there was any consciousness of this on the part of the poet or the audience, the play is reduced to a more bewildering series of riddles as regards the personality of the characters than Dr. Verrall or Professor Norwood ever conceived. When is Pentheus Pentheus, and when is he Dionysus? when is Dionysus the enemy of Pentheus, and when is he another form of him? and how are these transitions between ego and alter ego managed?"<sup>95</sup>

We are not interested, at present, in theories regarding the origin of tragedy, but if Professor Murray would have us admit the explanation which he offers for the origin of anagnorisis, he must offer us more convincing arguments than he does. He writes: "The poets find it hard to write without bringing in an anagnorisis somewhere;"<sup>96</sup> and he feels that this is to be accounted for because in the old Sacer Ludus there was always a recognition of the Daimon. But is such a difficult theory to be adopted when it fails to fit the facts found in so many places? A much more likely reason for the popularity of the recognition scene is to be found in an essay by Professor Throop who says:

"It is easy to see that the tragic poets took recognition from the epic, both because it happened to be in the tale itself, and also because they saw therein its dramatic value and its great applicability when stressed and reshaped for their purposes."<sup>97</sup>

Here, then, is the ultimate rationale of the recognition scene: it happens to be in the old myths which the tragedians chose, and it has, when properly constructed, tremendous dramatic and emotional appeal.

## CHAPTER V

## SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

In concluding this thesis we need not give a lengthy evaluation of the recognition scene in Euripides. We have said that the anagnorisis is to be judged in concrete instances by the effect it has on the reader or the audience. What Aristotle has to say about it is important for a theoretical understanding of its place in drama and its use as a technical dramatic device; but his divisions and subdivisions, his definitions and distinctions will not be of great help in gaining a literary appreciation of the worth of this important feature of Greek tragedy. In our review of the plays of Euripides we have observed how skillfully the great dramatist arouses suspense in his recognitions, how he excites sympathy and utilizes the element of surprise, how he spices these scenes, from time to time, with the bitterness of irony or the tang of adventure. Now he appeals to our curiosity, now to our appreciation of subtle reasoning, but always dramatically, always with that stark realism which is so characteristic of all his work. His power of language may not equal that of Aeschylus, his feeling for the delicate shades of character may not be so fine as that of Sophocles; but, for all that, he still remains the most tragic of poets. Would it be too bold to assert that this is due, in some small measure, to the frequent and effective use of anagnorisis



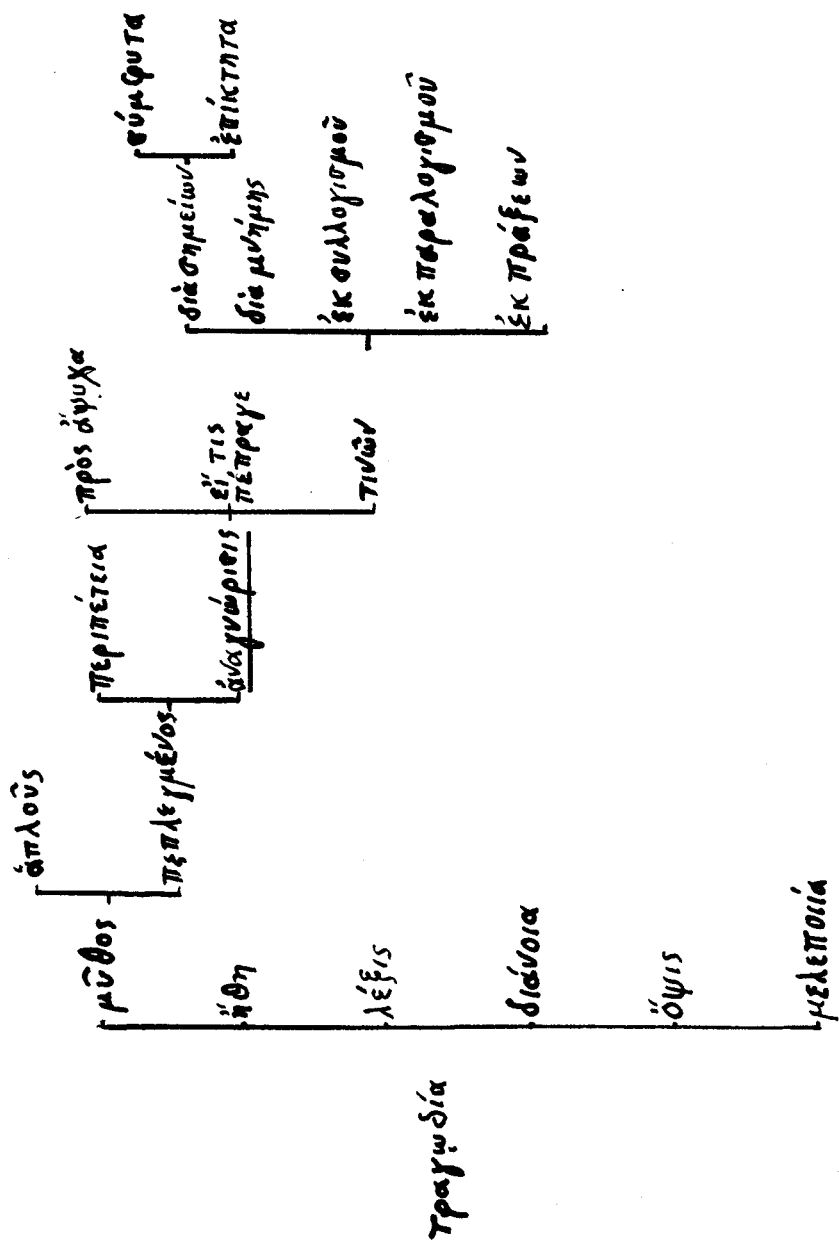
which we have noted? This much, at least, will easily be admitted; among all the situations in the plays of Euripides which arouse our pity and fear, the recognition scene holds an eminent place.

Professor Perrin has written:

"When father or mother and child, husband and wife, brother and sister are separated by fortune for many years and then brought unexpectedly together again, the problem of mutual recognition is a fascinating one, which taxes the resources of any literary artist who attempts to solve it in a way to satisfy his audience of hearers or readers."<sup>98</sup>

Euripides' solution may not seem satisfactory in all respects but it has its undeniable merits. If these have not been apparent in the analysis to which we have submitted the plays the fault is, more than likely, our own. For, divesting ourselves of modern prejudices and reading these scenes with a fair, if not a sympathetic mind, we cannot help finding in them a rare poetic beauty and emotional appeal. And this, after all, is what we seek principally in every work of dramatic art.

## APPENDIX A

THE POSITION OF ANAGNORISIS IN TRAGEDY

## APPENDIX B

THE TYPES OF ANAGNORISIS

(Poetics, 1454b19-1455a21. Butcher's translation)

What recognition is has already been explained. We will now enumerate its kinds. First, the least artistic form, which, from poverty of wit, is most commonly employed---recognition by signs. Of these some are congenital---such as 'the spear which the earth born race bear on their bodies' or the stars introduced by Carcinus in his Thyestes. Others are acquired after birth; of these some are bodily marks, as scars; some external tokens, as necklaces, or the little ark in the Tyro by which the discovery is effected. Even these admit of more or less skillful treatment. Thus in the recognition of Odysseus by his scar, the discovery is made in one way by the nurse and in another by the swineherd. The use of tokens for the express purpose of proof---and, indeed, any formal proof with or without tokens---is a less artistic mode of recognition. A better kind is that which comes about by a turn of incident, as in the bath scene in the Odyssey.

Next come the recognitions invented at will by the poet, and on that account wanting in art. For example, Orestes in the Iphigenia reveals the fact that he is Orestes. She, indeed, makes herself known by the letter; but he, by speaking himself, and saying what the poet and not the plot requires. This, therefore, is nearly allied to the fault above

mentioned: for Orestes might as well have brought tokens with him. Another similar instance is the 'voice of the shuttle' in the Tereus of Sophocles.

The third kind depends on memory when the sight of some object awakens a feeling: as in the Cyprians of Dicaeogenes, where the hero breaks into tears on seeing the picture; or, again, in the 'Lay of Alcinous' where Odysseus, hearing the minstrel play the lyre, recalls the past and weeps; and hence, the recognition.

The fourth kind is by process of reasoning. Thus in the Choe-phori: 'Some one resembling me has come: no one resembles me but Orestes: therefore Orestes has come.' Such, too, is the discovery made by Iphigenia in the play of Polydus the Sophist. It was a natural reflection for Orestes to make, 'So I, too, must die at the altar like my sister.' So, again, in the Tydeus of Theodectes, the father says, 'I come to find my son and I lose my own life.' So, too, in the Phineidae: the women, on seeing the place, inferred their fate: 'Here we are doomed to die, for here we are cast forth.'

Again, there is a composite kind of recognition, involving false inference on the part of one of the characters, as in the Odysseus Disguised as a Messenger. A said that no one else was able to bend the bow .....hence B (the disguised Odysseus) imagined that A would recognize the bow, which, in fact, he had not seen; and to bring about a recognition by this means—the expectation that A would recognize the bow—is a false inference.

But, of all recognitions, the best is that which arises from the incidents themselves, where the startling discovery is made by natural means. Such is the Oedipus of Sophocles, and the Iphigeneia: for it was natural that Iphigeneia should wish to dispatch a letter. These recognitions alone dispense with the artificial aid of tokens or amulets. Next come the recognitions by process of reasoning.

## APPENDIX C

OTHER FORMS OF ANAGNORISIS IN EURIPIDES

In the plays to be mentioned below, strict recognition scenes do not occur but anagnorisis, in the broad meaning of discovery, has a prominent place.

The Cyclops

This play has its climax in the discovery of the duplicity of Ulysses. Here, also, we find peripeteia linked with anagnorisis. The discovery occurs at line 690.

The Andromache

The meeting of Hermione and Orestes is, in a sense, a recognition; but since it is unimportant to the plot and too brief to allow dramatic treatment, we have not thought it worth detailed examination. It begins at line 891 and ends at line 900.

The Iphigeneia at Aulis

The climax of this drama is brought about by Clytaemnestra's discovery that the supposed marriage of Iphigeneia to Achilles was a mere plot to bring the maid from Argos to Aulis as a sacrifice to Artemis. The anagnorisis occurs during the dialogue between Clytaemnestra and the old servant from line 873 to line 896.

The Medea

This play abounds in discoveries in the broader sense, and we

need not enumerate them all. Before the play begins Medea learns that Jason has put her away; she learns from Creon that she is to be driven from Corinth; Jason learns from the Chorus that his children have been slain, and he recognizes the wiles of Medea in the fatal bridal gifts which have been sent to Creusa. All of these discoveries contribute to the rapid movement of the play, and each is a masterpiece of dramatic technique.

#### The Hippolytus

Theseus discovers at line 1408 that his suspicions of Hippolytus have been unfounded, after Artemis shows that Aphrodite is responsible for the mad passion of Phaedra and that Hippolytus is without blame.

#### The Suppliants

This play is a good instance of the episodic drama and, consequently, it contains few, if any, discoveries. Every messenger role, however, is closely linked with anagnorisis in its wide sense of a transition from ignorance to knowledge; and hence the news of Theseus' victory (634-770), so important in determining the future turn of the play, may be listed as a discovery.

#### The Orestes

At line 380 Menelaus discovers the identity of Orestes when the latter freely makes known his name. The incident is unimportant, and is included here for the sake of completeness rather than for its dramatic interest.

#### The Heracles Furens

There is a powerful discovery at line 1088, where Heracles re-

covers from his fit of madness and learns that he has slain his wife and sons. This scene, if we consider it as a thing apart, may well be classed with the most tragic work of Euripides, but it has little logical connection with the first part of the play.

#### The Children of Heracles

Near the end of the play there is an announcement of the miraculous victory of the Athenians. The anagnorisis resembles, in some respects, a similar scene in the Suppliants.

#### The Troades, Phoenissae and Rhesus

These plays can hardly be said to involve anagnorisis in any sense of the word. This may be due to their episodic nature---or their episodic nature may be due to it.



## APPENDIX D

ANAGNORISIS IN THE LOST PLAYS OF EURIPIDES

(Adapted from Bates)

The Aegeus

Aegeus recognizes his son Theseus by the ivory-hilted sword which he had left for him beneath the great rock at Troezen.

The Aeolus

The incest of Canace and Macareus is discovered when Canace gives birth to a child.

The Alcmaeon at Corinth

Tisiphone, the beautiful daughter of Alcmaeon, is living unknown in her father's house. It is supposed that a recognition scene occurs sometime during the play since, at the end of the play, Alcmaeon is said to recover his lost son as well as his daughter.

The Alexander

Priam recognizes his lost son, Paris, after Cassandra declares his identity at the funeral games.

The Alope

The fragments which remain of this play show that it contained a typical recognition scene. Alope bore a son to Poseidon and, through shame, exposed it. The garments of the child are brought to the king of Eleusis, father of Alope, who recognizes them and casts Alope into pri-

son. The child is exposed again and again saved by shepherds. In later life Theseus recognizes the child as the son of Poseidon and gives him the kingdom of Eleusis.

#### The Antigone

In Euripides' version of this story, Antigone is rescued by Haemon and bears him a son who, in maturity, is recognized by Creon as one of the race of the Sparti from the birth-mark borne by all the descendants of the men sprung from the dragon's teeth.

#### The Antiope

Antiope, daughter of Nioteus, king of Boeotia, bears twin sons to Zeus and exposes them. After various hardships Antiope seeks refuge in a hut where her two sons, now young men, were living. A herdsman brings about the recognition of the mother.

#### The Auge

This play contains the recognition of an exposed child which Auge, priestess of Athena, bears to Heracles. The recognition is supposed to have been managed by certain rings and trinkets which were left with the child.

#### The Chrysippus

The plot centers around a paralogism, that is, a recognition by false reasoning. The sword of Laius is found by the body of the slain Chrysippus; and after it is recognized, Laius is in great danger until the crime is proved to be the work of Hippodamia.

### The Cresphontes

The recognition scene in this play was famous in antiquity. The infant, Cresphontes, is saved by his mother, Merope, after his father and all of his brothers and sisters have been slain by Polyphontes. Later he returns to his home in disguise and tells Polyphontes that he has killed the one remaining child of Merope. His mother, hearing this and convinced that he was the slayer of her son, is on the point of murdering him with an ax when an old servant recognizes the boy and saves his life. The recognition scene is praised by Aristotle (Poetics, 1454a5) and Plutarch (Moral., p. 998 E.)

### The Hysipyle

Two sons are born of the union of Jason and Hysipyle. These boys are lost in early childhood but in later life they find their mother and rescue her from the misfortunes into which she has fallen. The recognition scene is not preserved in the fragments but is said to have resembled that of the Iphigeneia in Tauris.

### The Ino

Probably contained a recognition of Ion by Themisto, who had succeeded her as the wife of Athamas, king of Thessaly. Ino's identity remained secret after her return to the palace of Athamas because of the wretched state to which poverty and insanity had reduced her. Recognition, if it entered into the play of Euripides, probably occurred after Themisto had slain her own sons, thinking them the children of the stranger woman whom Athamas had introduced into his palace.

### The Melannippe the Wise

Fragments from the early portions of this play are concerned with the usual story of illegitimate and exposed children, and we conclude that a recognition scene occurs when the children reach manhood.

### The Melannippe the Prisoner

Gives another version of the same story, with a recognition differing only accidentally from that of Melannippe the Wise.

### The Oedipus

The main lines of this story are too well established to make any wide variety of treatment possible. The Oedipus Tyrannus of Sophocles is really an elaborate recognition scene from beginning to end, and it is likely that in the play of Euripides we have the same gradual growth of knowledge and deepening of conviction which is used to such good effect in the extant play.

### The Oeneus

Oeneus, the aged king of Calydon, is driven from his throne by the sons of his brother, Agrius. He is living in disguise somewhere in the kingdom when he is discovered and recognized by his grandson, Diomedes, who restores him to the throne.

### The Peleus

Contains a recognition scene between the aged father of Achilles and his grandson, Neoptolemus.

### The Phaeton

Merops gradually recognizes the charred body of Phaeton after the

boy was struck down by the thunderbolt of Zeus.

### The Philoctetes

Euripides seems to have treated the recognition pretty much as Sophocles had done. Odysseus goes in disguise to the island of Lemnos, steals the arrows of Heracles and reveals himself to Philoctetes by his own words.

### The Pleisthenes

This play may have contained the highly tragic recognition scene in which Atreus was informed that he had slain his own son, thinking the boy to be the child of his brother, Thyestes.

### The Scyrians

Here, too, it seems that a recognition scene is involved. The story is the familiar one of Thetis' attempt to save Achilles from his fated death by disguising him as a girl and hiding him at Scyros among the daughters of Lycomedes. The identity of Achilles is learned when he spurns the feminine finery which Odysseus, an ambassador from the Greeks, had brought and seizes, instead, the spear and shield which were also exhibited.

### The Thyestes

It is not definitely known which event in the criminal life of Thyestes was chosen as the subject of this play, but there are indications that its theme was the horrible banquet with its dreadful recognition scene.

The remaining fragments of the lost plays are either too slight to give any idea of the plot or show that the plays were concerned with myths in which recognitions were hardly likely to occur. The title of the Hippolytus Veiled indicates a possible recognition scene, but we cannot establish this from the few fragments of the play that remain to us. With the exception of the Oedipus we have given none but examples of anagnorisis in the stricter acceptance of the term. Discoveries of some sort could be found in all the plays. A summary, such as we have given in this Appendix cannot help us appreciate the use which Euripides makes of the anagnorisis in particular instances, but it should have cumulative force in showing the importance which such scenes had in his eyes.

## REFERENCES

1. Lane Cooper, Aristotle's Poetics, p. 1.
2. Bywater, Aristotle on the Art of Poetry, p. 216.
3. Liddell and Scott, s.v.
4. Anagnorisis is defined at 1452a29 and referred to in some thirty other places. For ἀναγνώρις and ῥήθωρ see 1453a10 and 1448a32. All references to the Poetics will be made according to Bekker's marginal and linear numbers.
5. Compare Bywater, pp. 162, 194, 235 and Introduction, xiv. On page 169 he writes: "It will be observed that Aristotle uses the two terms (anagnorisis and peripeteia) without explanation, as though they were already part of the established language of the theatre."
6. Poetics 1450a33.
7. Bywater, p. 169.
8. Poetics 1452a28. Translations throughout this thesis are the writer's own unless otherwise specified.
9. Bywater, p. 203.
10. Poetics 1452a4. Butcher's translation.
11. Poetics 1454a4.
12. Tumlirz, Die tragischen Affecte Mitleid und Furcht nach Aristoteles, p. 34, quoted by Bywater, p. 224.
13. Poetics 1450a38.
14. Poetics 1450a15.

15. Poetics 1450a22.
16. See the whole of section 1450a for the matter of this paragraph.<sup>4</sup>
17. Poetics 1452a15.
18. Poetics 1452b31.
19. Poetics 1455b33.
20. See Butcher, p. 278.
21. Poetics 1452a29-1452b8
22. Gruender, Experimental Psychology, p. 196.
23. Metaphysics 980a1.
24. Poetics 1448b12.
25. Lane Cooper, "Fifth Form of Discovery in the Poetics," Classical Philology 13 (1918), p. 252.
26. Bywater, p. 215. And compare the Prologue of Menander's Periceironene, recited by Agnosia.
27. Lucian, Περὶ τοῦ μὴ ῥαδίως πιστεύειν διαβολῇ.
28. F. L. Lucas, "The Reverse of Aristotle," Classical Review 37 (1923), p. 102.
29. Henry W. Prescott, "The Comedy of Errors," Classical Philology 24 (1929), p. 40. There are, of course, assumptions in this summary of Prescott's which go considerably beyond the evidence. If ἄγνοια is the basis of the tragic plot then ἁμαρτία is an intellectual error, and if ἁμαρτία is an intellectual error then ἄγνοια is the basis of the tragic plot. But the whole case for the theory is weakened by such a manifest petitio principii. For the meaning of ἁμαρτία, see



Bywater, pp. 215 and 326; Butcher, pp. 317-323; Twining, p. 103; Tumlirz apud Bywater, loc. cit.; Dacier and Marmontel apud Twining, loc. cit.; Tyrwhitt does not treat the question; Hermann hints at his solution on page 147; the views of Castelvetro, Margoliouth and other commentators were not available. As to *κίνδυνος*, there is no mention of this as "an issue of the fundamental error of misapprehension" in the Poetics.

30. It is interesting to note in this connection Aristotle's belief in the possibility of inheriting acquired characteristics. (De Generatione Animalium 721b29). With this passage in mind we should, perhaps, better say that any sign, and not merely those *ἐπίκρητα* may be a mark on the body, since scars and the like can be congenital as well as acquired.
31. Poetics 1452a3, 1454b29.
32. Quoted by Bywater, p. 234.
33. Twining, p. 174.
34. Twining, p. 177.
35. Bywater, p. 203.
36. Tyrwhitt, p. 127.
37. Twining, p. 181.
38. Hermann, p. 154.
39. Bywater, p. 236.
40. "The parts of Epic Poetry must be the same as those of Tragedy. It requires Peripeties and Discoveries, though it need not have Song

and Spectacle." Poetics 1459b10.

41. Twining, p. 187.
42. Tyrwhitt, p. 129.
43. Lane Cooper, "Fifth Form of Discovery in the Poetics," Classical Philology 13 (1918), p. 258.
44. J. A. Smith, "Aristotle, Poetics c. XVI, 10." Classical Quarterly 18 (1924), p. 167.
45. Poetics 1460a20.
46. Aristotle, De Sophisticis Elenchis 167b1.
47. Quoted by Bywater, p. 237.
48. Cooper, p. 253.
49. Matthaï, Essays on Greek Tragic Poetry, p. 242.
50. Donald Clive Stuart, "The Recognition Scene in Greek Tragedy." American Journal of Philology 39 (1918), p. 278. All subsequent references to Stuart will be found in this essay.
51. Hecuba 668-683. All quotations from the plays of Euripides are given from A. S. Way's translation for the Loeb Classical Library.
52. Haigh, The Tragic Drama of the Greeks, p. 346. All subsequent references to Haigh are from this work.
53. Norwood, Greek Tragedy, p. 192. All subsequent references to Norwood are from this work.
54. Haigh, p. 288.
55. Alcestis 1103-1106.
56. Ibid., 1117-1123, 1133-1134.

57. Norwood, p. 260.
58. Helen 557-564.
59. Ibid., 582.
60. Ibid., 614.
61. Murray, Euripides and His Age, p.144.
62. Poetics 1452b6.
63. Ibid., 1455a18.
64. Ibid., 1454b32.
65. Norwood, p. 248.
66. Iphigeneia in Tauris 472-476.
67. Ibid., 504.
68. Ibid., 521-523.
69. Ibid., 543-551, 567-568.
70. Ibid., 609-613.
71. Ibid., 625-629.
72. Ibid., 769-779.
73. Murray, Euripides and His Age, p. 144.
74. Iphigeneia in Tauris 808-817.
75. Ibid., 827-833.
76. B. Perrin, "Recognition Scenes in Greek Literature." American Journal of Philology 30 (1909), p. 398. All subsequent references to Perrin will be found in this essay.
77. Poetics 1454b31.
78. Haigh, p. 308.

79. Ion 1282-1291.
80. Ibid., 1408-1438.
81. Quoted by M. Andrews, "Euripides and Menander." Classical Quarterly 18 (1924), p. 4.
82. Poetics 1455a5.
83. Perrin, p. 387.
84. Stuart, p. 288.
85. Perrin, p. 394.
86. Electra 524-531.
87. Ibid., 534-539.
88. Ibid., 540-546.
89. Ibid., 572-579.
90. Bacchae 1233-1240.
91. Ibid., 1244-1258.
92. Poetics 1454a4.
93. Bacchae 1277-1289.
94. See Miss Jane Harrison's, Themis, pp. 341-347 for Murray's first exposition of this view.
95. Pickard-Cambridge, Dithyramb Tragedy and Comedy, p. 187.
96. Gilbert Murray, in Themis, p. 345.
97. George Reeves Throop, "Epic and Dramatic." Washington University Studies 5 (1917), p. 21.
98. Perrin, p. 371.

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The Thesis "The Anagnorisis and its Use in Euripides," written by William P. Le Saint, S.J. has been accepted by the Graduate School of Loyola University, with reference to form, and by the readers whose names appear below, with reference to content. It is, therefore, accepted as a partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.

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